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GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS OF UTE CHILDREN.

THE early life of the Indian child is closely associated with that of its mother. At a tender age it is placed in what is called, in the Ute tongue, a *kun* (the *u* pronounced as in *push*), which answers the purpose of a cradle. This is made by the mother out of wood and buck-skin. A flat board, a little longer than the child, is cut somewhat in the shape of a small ironing-board, and on one side of this a skin pouch is attached, in which the papoose is laid and snugly and immovably laced. Above the baby's head is a little wicker awning, beneath which the little face, with roguish black eyes, peeps out. From this *kun* the infant is only removed in cases of necessity; and as the mother performs her daily work, the arrangement, child and all, is leaned up against the side of the lodge, or the trunk of a tree, or even suspended from an overhanging bough. On a journey the squaw carries this strapped to her back, while the little one enjoys itself by retrospectively viewing the landscape. When the baby cries, as it sometimes will, it is gently swayed from side to side, and the soothing motion soon rocks it to sleep. The life of the Ute babe, therefore, is hardly a happy one. It has no rattles or gum-rings to play with, and indeed it would have no chance to grasp such toys, with its little arms confined to its sides. But it is a good child generally, and does not frighten its mother by placing things in its mouth and poking sticks in its eyes and ears. In lieu of such infantile amusements, it closely observes all that goes on around it, and probably thinks what great things it will do when it has emerged from its cocoon.

After it is old enough to quit its prison, the child continues for some years to be the constant companion of its mother. If a boy, he remains under the maternal care until he is old enough to learn to shoot and engage in manly sports and employments.

Indian children resemble their white brothers and sisters in disposition and the manner of amusing themselves. The small Indians play, laugh, cry, and act precisely as civilized children, and toys are as much a necessity with them as with our own little ones. They make their own playthings, and derive as much enjoyment from them as do white children from those which are bought in the stores. In this respect, necessity being the mother of invention, Indian youngsters possess more ingenuity than the little men and women of the East who are blessed with greater advantages.

At White River Agency, in northwestern Colorado, I one day came across a small papoose, probably six years of age, who was employed in making toy horses of mud, the legs being supplied by

slender willow twigs. He had finished six or eight of them, two of which I secured, and they were excellent imitations of the animals which had served as his models. He displayed considerable artistic talent at this early age, but in his youthful mind he saw in them nothing but toys, which he had arranged in pairs, and in his childish way he made me understand that they were horses or ponies starting out on a hunt.

A little Ute girl was occupied in drawing,—not with pen and paper or slate and pencil, but, utilizing the materials which Nature had given her, she had taken a smooth cobblestone, and with a sharp flint had etched the figures of an Indian boy and girl dancing, and the production would have put to shame any kindergarten pupil. This work of art I also procured, but unfortunately left it, with other collections, at the agency in the hurry of our departure. These are examples of the employments of Indian children in their native state, uninfluenced by contact with civilized life.

A year later we were travelling through the barren cañons of southeastern Utah, surrounded on every hand by ancient ruined stone houses and other evidences of a long-departed race. But even amongst these remains of former centuries, we found many traces of the little ones, who had left in the plaster of the crumbling buildings the impressions of their little fingers, or the pictures of their out-spread hands on the walls.

On all sides we saw quantities of broken pottery, and picked up here and there specimens of delicately fashioned arrow-points, some of them so tiny that they could scarcely have served for anything but toys. One day, in passing down a broad valley where the ancient ruins abound, we came across the site of a modern Ute encampment. Here the little folks had also left unmistakable traces of their recent presence in the remains of a rude play-house. A rough table had been formed by laying a large flat stone across two supporting rocks; on this a dozen pieces of the ancient pottery from the neighboring ruins had been extemporized for a tea-set, and arranged as though the little Utes had been playing tea-party, just as we have done ourselves in our early youth, the edibles being represented by little piles of sand and pebbles. In selecting their dishes the children had exhibited a remarkable appreciation of the beautiful, as these specimens of pottery were the finest and largest that we saw in that section, and one of them was the choicest example of this ware that we had seen in our travels. It is scarcely necessary to add that they were promptly transferred to our saddle-bags.

In the desert of northeastern Arizona we also had a somewhat limited opportunity of observing the pastimes of the children. As we approached the Moqui villages, built on high plateaus, we could

see scores of nude pappooses running along the ledges and leaping from cliff to cliff, attracted by our approach.

The Moqui boys amuse themselves with their miniature bows and tipless arrows and their little throw-sticks (somewhat resembling boomerangs), practising for the hunt. By the aid of such weapons the men capture rabbits, which form an important addition to their larders.

The girls are all provided with dolls decked out with colored feathers and brilliant rags, or rain-gods carved out of rotten wood and gaudily painted, and it is a difficult matter to induce them to part with these treasures. A very pretty girl of fifteen, who possessed one of these, was loath to part with it, her mother telling us pathetically that she had owned it since she was a little child and valued it highly. But the glimpse of a shining new silver quarter was more than the garrulous old woman could resist, and we carried off the prize notwithstanding the protestations of the less avaricious daughter. In contrast with this parent was the mother who, in another quarter of Moqui, presented her three little ones to us, and with tears in her eyes told us that she had had two others, which (with a wave of the hand upward) had gone to a better land.